

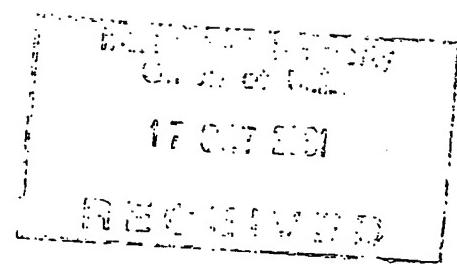
NEW ZEALAND

PATENTS ACT, 1953

Divided out of No. 336696

**COMPLETE SPECIFICATION**

"Multifold Panel Assemblies"



We, **FLETCHER BUILDING HOLDINGS LIMITED**, a company duly incorporated under the laws of New Zealand of 7 Maui Street, Pukete Industrial Estate, Te Rapa, Hamilton, New Zealand, do hereby declare the invention for which we pray that a patent may be granted to us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:

513719 20 FEB 2003

-2-

RECEIVED

The present invention relates to multi-fold window and/or door assemblies.

The present invention is directed to a multifold arrangement (whether top mounted or bottom mounted) adapted to lend itself to a more positive closure and a more secure closure compared to alternative procedures. For example, as disclosed hereinafter by reference to Figures 1 and 2 hereof, a typical prior art arrangement shown in plan for the closure of a door or window opening is that using a four panel arrangement. The prior art typically has required that the arrangement positioned at the distal pivot (A') requires the pivot point positioned forward (outside) the panel edge and therefore offset from the bifold carriage centre line. An example of this design is seen in New Zealand Patent Specification No. 229391.

The present invention is directed to an arrangement for at least a bi-fold panel (glazed or otherwise) structure, and whether for door or window purposes or a hybrid of both, whether top or bottom mounted (supported), which alone or in conjunction with a mirrored arrangement can provide an alternative to such an arrangement.

In a first aspect the present invention consists of a pivot providing unit comprising

a bogie for supporting or suspending a panel of a multifold window or door assembly of a kind having two or more window or door panels (glazed or otherwise) hinged together about a vertical axis and adapted, in a closed condition, to lie in the plane (hereafter "said plane") of top and bottom tracking (and with at least one of which said bogie is to be tracked) of a wall opening (at least in part) closable thereby, and

**wherein** a pivot axis defining member pivotally dependent from said bogie and including mounting means for mounting said pivot axis defining member to said panel, said pivot axis defining member defining a pivot axis about which said bogie can pivot, said pivot axis defining member being set to a position disposed in advance (not intermediate) of the rotational axes of wheels of said bogie and wherein said pivot axis defining member is mountable with said panel so that said pivot about which said bogie can pivot is in line with the centre line of said tracking.

Preferably said mounting means is to engage with and at the edge of said panel.

543719 20 FEB 2003

RECEIVED

Preferably said bogie has 4 wheels.

Preferably said pivot providing unit is substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 12A and/or 12B of the accompanying drawings.

In a further aspect the present invention consists of a **pivot providing unit** comprising

a bogie supporting or suspending a panel of a multifold window or door assembly of a kind having two or more window or door panels (glazed or otherwise) hinged together about a vertical axis and adapted, in a closed condition, to lie in the plane (hereafter "said plane") of top and bottom tracking (and with at least one of which said bogie is tracked) of a wall opening (at least in part) closable thereby, and

a pivot axis defining member pivotally dependent from said bogie and including mounting means mounting said pivot axis defining member to said panel, said pivot axis defining member defining a pivot axis about which said bogie can pivot, said pivot axis defining member being set to a position disposed in advance (not intermediate) of the rotational axes of wheels of said bogie and wherein said pivot axis defining member is mounted with said panel so that said pivot about which said bogie can pivot is in line with the centre line of said tracking .

Preferably said pivot providing means is engaged at one end of said panel.

Preferably said pivot about which said bogie can pivot is parallel to said plane.

Preferably said bogie has 4 wheels.

As used herein the reference to "panel" in relation to multi-fold window and/or door panels is applicable to any substantially rigid panel form capable of being mounted and/or interconnected from a related panel. The word "panel" includes within its scope composite structures (glazed or otherwise) and reference to "door and/or window" should be considered as being such that hybrid or composite structures are within the ambit of the term. Also structures of as few as two panels only are envisaged.

To those skilled in the art to which the invention relates, many changes in construction and widely differing embodiments and applications of the invention will suggest themselves without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the

-513719 10 FEB 2003  
**RECEIVED**

appended claims. The disclosures and the descriptions herein are purely illustrative and are not intended to be in any sense limiting.

A preferred form of the present invention will now be described by reference to the accompanying drawings in which;

Figure 1 is simple plan view of a prior art closure assembly of four door or window panels for a wall opening, there being a grouping of two to one side and two panels to the other side, as shown in New Zealand Patent Specification No.229391.

Figure 2 shows the arrangement of Figure 1 in one of its several open conditions, such a prior art structure showing the group of two panels disposed to one side of said plane whilst the leaf panel is similarly preferably disposed to the same side of said plane and two panels to the other side,

Figure 3 is also a plan view depicting a prior art arrangement where the distal pivot axis "D" is in said plane but is set substantially back from the leading edge of the panel,

Figure 4 is a plan view of the arrangement of Figure 3 in one of its several open conditions,

Figure 5A is a close up side view of a bogie providing distal pivot axis "D" for the prior art arrangement shown in Figures 3 and 4,

Figure 5B is a plan view of the prior art bogie of Figure 5A,

Figure 6 is an arrangement similar to that of Figure 3 but being one in accordance with the present invention, there being a first and second panel as defined in respect of the present invention on one side of the wall opening being mirrored by a complement of two further panels on the other side of the wall opening,

Figure 7 shows the open condition of the arrangement of the present invention shown in Figure 6, Figures 6 and 7 being shown similarly to the drawing notation used for the prior art arrangements of Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 and showing by letters

"A" a substantially vertical axis which is a preferred first panel pivot axis disposed on one side of said plane.

"B" a said first/second panel pivot axis on the other side of said plane to the pivot axis "A",

20 FEB 2003

- 5 -

RECEIVED

"C" a said distal pivot of the second panel in said plane, and the distal pivot being directly in line with the centre line of the tracking arrangement (compared to the distal part of prior art being either offset to the outside [as shown in Figures 1 and 2] or in the plane but set substantially back from the leading edge of the second panel [as shown in Figures 3 and 4]),

Figure 8A is a plan view in more detail showing a preferred form of arrangement as shown in Figure 6 and 7 (open) (the glazed areas being substantially reduced in size to allow compaction of the panel frames),

Figure 8B shows an enlargement of part of Figure 8A,

Figure 9A is a similar arrangement to that shown in Figure 8A however one in which the interior side of the panels are dressed in timber facings, and

Figure 9B is an enlargement of part of Figure 9A,

Figures 10A and 10B are related drawings with the "X" of Figure 10A showing in plan the pivot axis of the distal pivot "C", the bogies of the distal panel pivot providing unit shown in Figure 12 simply being shown in plan in Figure 10A, the linking arrow between Figures 10A and 10B showing how the pivot axis is to overlie the pivot axis "C" in Figure 10B,

Figure 11A further illustrates in plan the leading edges of adjacent second panels in a four panel bifold assembly (closed condition), the pivot axis carrying units of Figure 12 being depicted by broken lines which are overlayed to emphasise the position of the pivot axis C in relation to the bogie, the dimension "d" shown to the left denoting the width of the frame seals,

Figure 11B is a similar arrangement to that of Figure 11A but in this case in relation to a door frame extrusion the position of which remains fixed in relation to the wall opening,

Figure 11C is yet another variant of the kind shown in Figures 11A and 11B, there being an additional hinged door panel to the right engageable with the extruded section forming the distal edge of the second bifold panel to the left,

Figure 12A is a perspective view of a preferred pivot providing unit including a bogie with a set of four wheels carrying a pivot axis defining member "C" capable of

513719 20 FEB 2003  
- 6 - RECEIVED

being located down the extrusions shown in Figures 11A, 11B or 11C, the lower member providing the means for tracking and pivoting the bottom of the panel about the same axis "C",

Figure 12B is an alternative embodiment to that of the preferred arrangement shown in Figure 12A, the pivot carrying bogie in this instance being inverted so as to engage the track at the bottom of the panel rather than the top, and

Figures 13A and 13B show how a reduced degree of scrub can be achieved by positioning the distal pivot axis further towards the leading edge of the panel, the extent of scrub in both cases being illustrated by an arc originating from the distal point "P", there being a scrub length " $\ell_{scrub}$ " related to the variables "x" and "y" defining the distance from the pivot axis to the ultimate scrub potential point "P" for a given angle  $\theta$  that the second panel makes with said plane, and

Figure 14A, 14B, and 14C correspond to the arrangements depicted in Figures 11A, 11B, and 11C respectively, however the extent of scrub in each case has been illustrated in the form of an arc, as with previous drawings the dimension "d" has been shown to indicate the width of the frame seals.

In the preferred form of the present invention each of the door panels or window panels 1 is preferably a glazed panel framed by aluminium extrusions as at least intimated by the plan diagram shown in Figures 8A and 8B which show glazing panels 2 between extrusions shown in plan from above (the glazing panels being compacted to allow for clarity).

Persons skilled in the art will appreciate however that any such framed structure, even if dressed with timber facings 3 as shown in Figures 9A and 9B, still accords with the present invention irrespective of whether or not pivot arrangements as depicted in Figure 7 and/or the prior art patent specification referred to might be utilised.

It is envisaged in accordance with the present invention that each pivot axis "A" is fixed relative to the wall but in some forms of the present invention these can be tracked to allow disposition of all of the panels to one side of the wall opening. Each pivot axis "B" is not tracked in any way and is a simple hinging arrangement

137 20 FEB 2003  
- 7 - RECEIVED

providing an axis displaced from said plane shown in Figures 6 and 7 by the broken line.

The arrangement provided at "C" locks the structure into a tracking relationship. Such tracking can be in the plane or can be offset from the plane provided however the pivot axis "C" provided by the means dependent from the track is in or at least substantially in said plane, i.e. is not displaced to the same extent from said plane as the pivot axes "A" and "B".

The axis "C-C" shown in Figure 12A is the pivot axis "C" shown in Figures 10A and 10B. Wheels 4 in a known way carry a member adapted to be fitted to the door or window panel. In this case however the pivot "C" is provided as far as possible to the right of the extrusions shown in Figures 11A, 11B and 11C as extrusions 5, 6, and 7 respectively.

The reasons for this emphasis on placement of the pivot axis as far as possible to the edge of the panel (or at least the extrusion 5, 6, or 7 thereof) is to minimise "scrub" owing to the arcuate movement of the distal point "P". There is a practical maximum allowable scrub that relates to the width of the door seal region 10 shown in Figures 14A, 14B and 14C. When the scrub exceeds this width the door will impinge upon the door frame 13 resulting in the door becoming jammed. Practical measures to alleviate this problem have, in the past, involved cutting the lower part the flange which in turn compromises the seal.

Within the present invention, different degrees of "scrub" are experienced for the various bifold arrangements shown in Figures 11A, 11B, and 11C. In each case the differences can be attributed to the positioning of the distal pivot axis "C" in relation to the distal point "P". For example, the panel 8 and seal 9 at the leading edge shown in Figure 14A will "scrub" into the frame seals 10 during opening and closure to a greater extent than the arrangement shown in Figure 14B where the scrub effect is largely mitigated due to the removal of the seal. In fact the extent of scrub for the arrangement shown in Figure 14B is so minimal that the leading edge needs to be magnified (as shown) to adequately visualise the path taken by the point "P" during opening and closure. For the arrangement shown in Figure 14C, the degree of scrub is

20 FEB 2003

-8 51371 RECEIVED

governed by the length of the flange 11. Even with the placement of the member 12 of the bogied pivot defining unit shown in Figure 12A in the rebate or channel of the extrusions 5, 6, or 7, there is still a degree of scrub which has been reduced by moving the pivot axis "C" closer to the ultimate extent leading edge of the panel.

Persons skilled in the art will appreciate the advantages to arise from top mounting and/or bottom mounting multifold panels using a combination of A, B and C axes over a mere combination of A and B axes.

- 9 -

20 FEB 2003

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:

51371 RECEIVED

1. A pivot providing unit comprising

a bogie for supporting or suspending a panel of a multifold window or door assembly of a kind having two or more window or door panels (glazed or otherwise) hinged together about a vertical axis and adapted, in a closed condition, to lie in the plane (hereafter "said plane") of top and bottom tracking (and with at least one of which said bogie is to be tracked) of a wall opening (at least in part) closable thereby, and

pivot axis defining member pivotally dependent from said bogie and including mounting means for mounting said pivot axis defining member to said panel, said pivot axis defining member defining a pivot axis about which said bogie can pivot, said pivot axis defining member being set to a position disposed in advance (not intermediate) of the rotational axes of wheels of said bogie and wherein said pivot axis defining member is mountable with said panel so that said pivot about which said bogie can pivot is in line with the centre line of said tracking.

2. A pivot providing unit as claimed in claim 1 wherein said mounting means is to engage with and at the edge of said panel.

3. A pivot providing unit as claimed in claims 1 or 2 wherein said bogie has 4 wheels.

4. A pivot providing unit as claimed in claim 1 substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 12A and/or 12B of the accompanying drawings.

5. A pivot providing unit comprising

a bogie supporting or suspending a panel of a multifold window or door assembly of a kind having two or more window or door panels (glazed or otherwise) hinged together about a vertical axis and adapted, in a closed condition, to lie in the plane (hereafter "said plane") of top and bottom tracking (and with at least one of which said bogie is tracked) of a wall opening (at least in part) closable thereby, and

a pivot axis defining member pivotally dependent from said bogie and including mounting means mounting said pivot axis defining member to said panel, said pivot axis defining member defining a pivot axis about which said bogie can

20 FEB 2003

- 51371 RECEIVED

pivot, said pivot axis defining member being set to a position disposed in advance (not intermediate) of the rotational axes of wheels of said bogie and wherein said pivot axis defining member is mounted with said panel so that said pivot about which said bogie can pivot is in line with the centre line of said tracking .

6. A pivot providing unit as claimed in claim 5 wherein said pivot providing means is engaged at one end of said panel.

7. A pivot providing unit as claimed in claims 5 or 6 wherein the pivot about which said bogie can pivot is parallel to said plane.

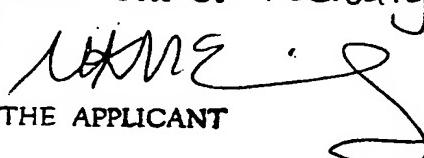
8. A pivot providing unit as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 7 wherein said bogie has 4 wheels.

DATED THIS 20<sup>th</sup> DAY OF February 2

AJ PARK

PER

AGENTS FOR THE APPLICANT



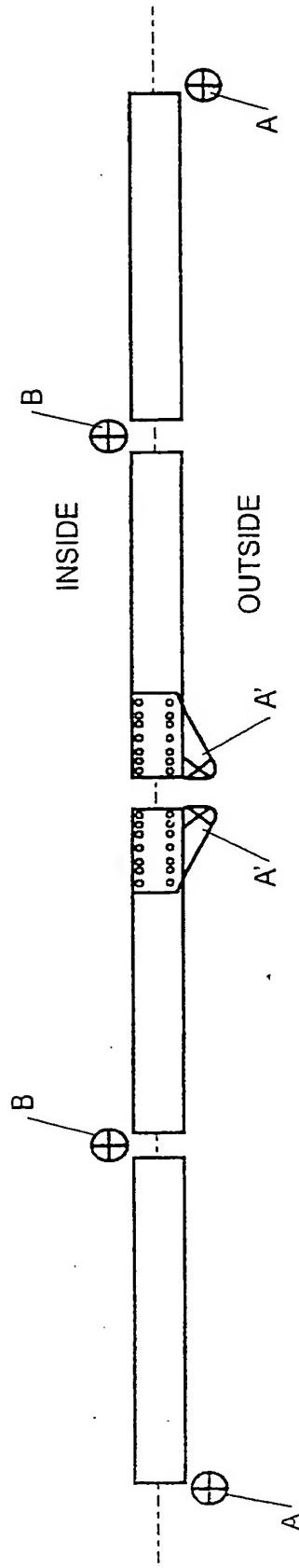


FIGURE 1 (prior art)

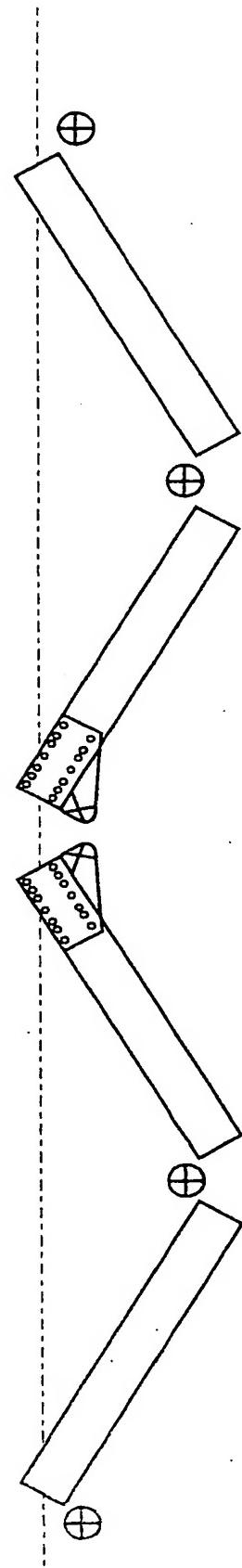


FIGURE 2 (prior art)

2/17

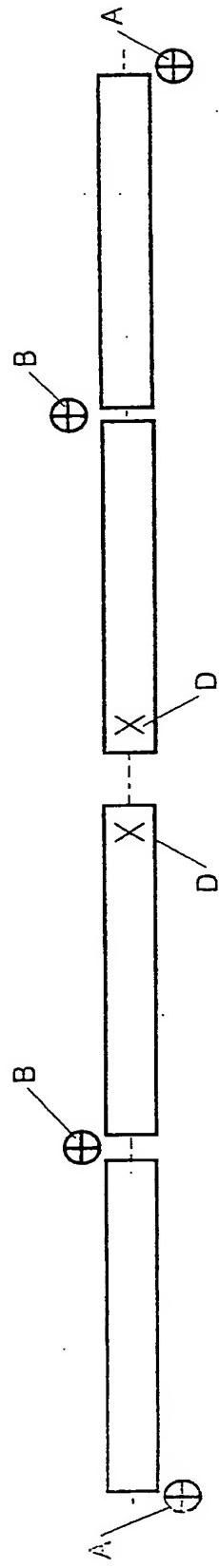


FIGURE 3 (prior art)

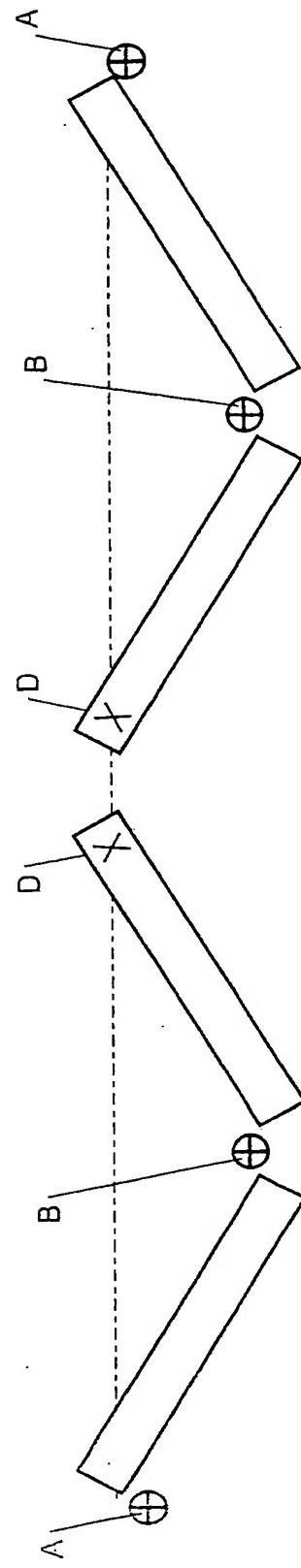
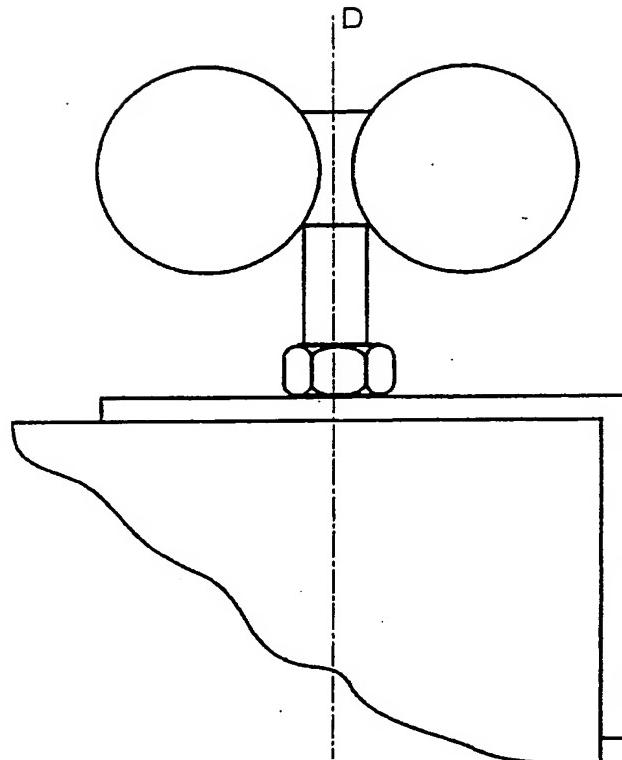
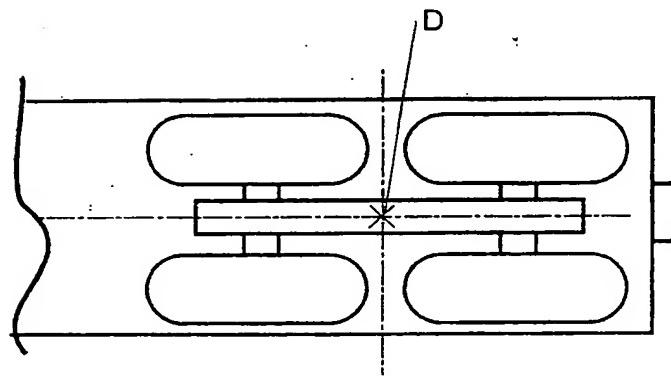


FIGURE 4 (prior art)

3/17



**FIGURE 5A** (prior art)



**FIGURE 5B** (prior art)

4/17

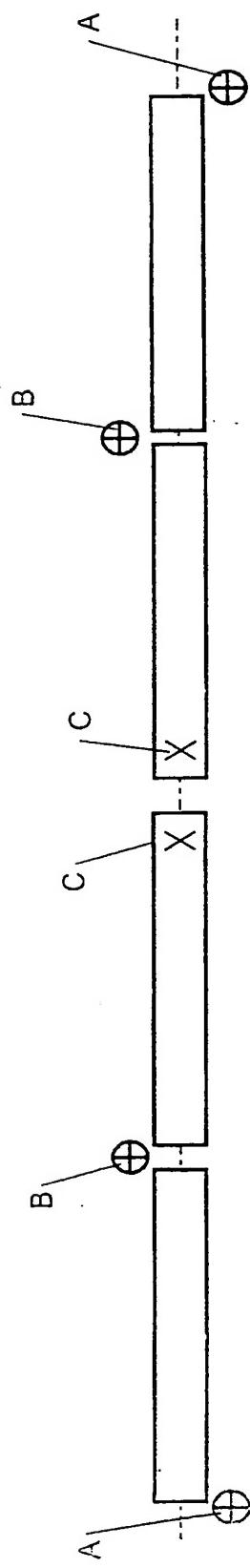


FIGURE 6

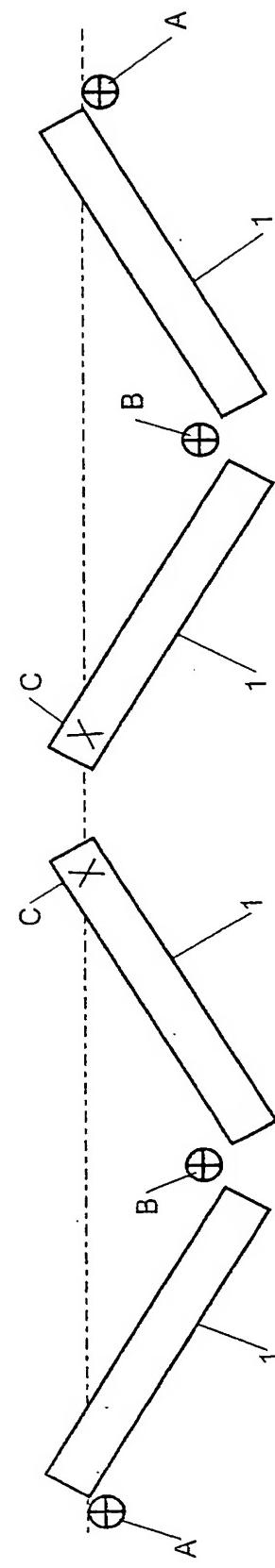


FIGURE 7

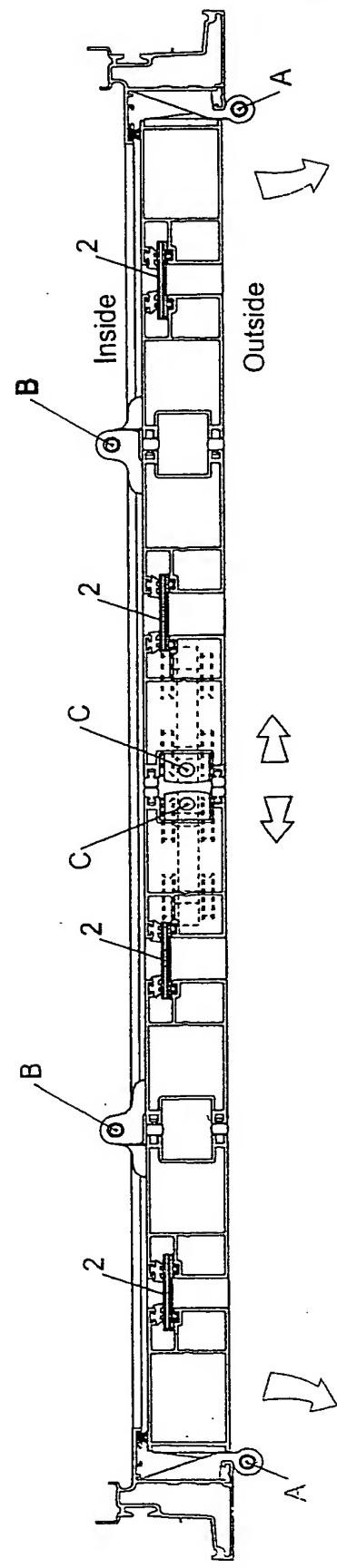


FIGURE 8A

6/17

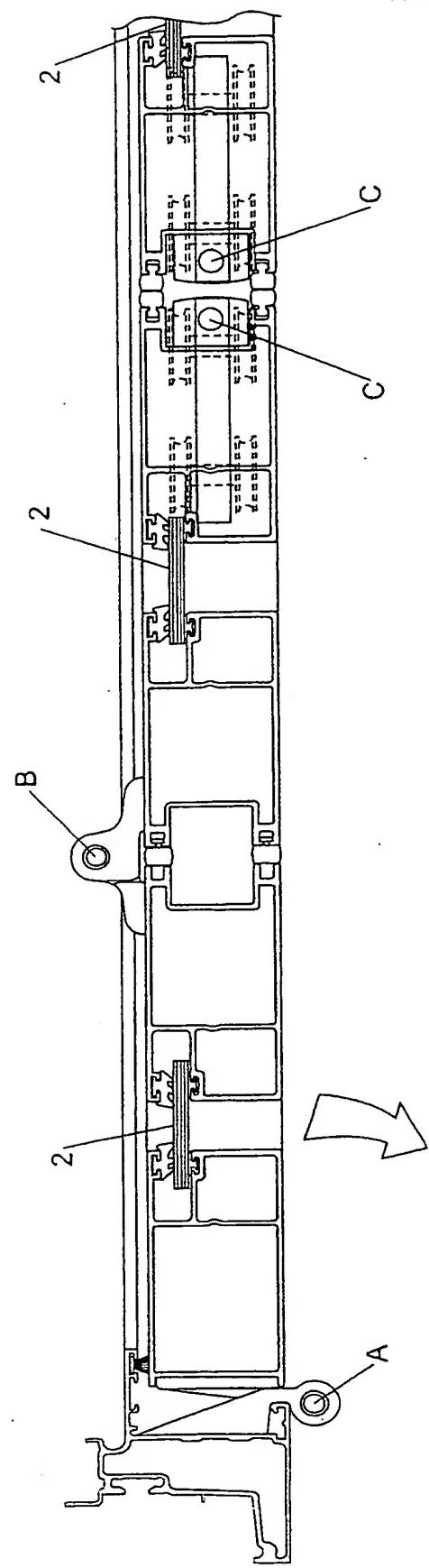


FIGURE 8B

7/17

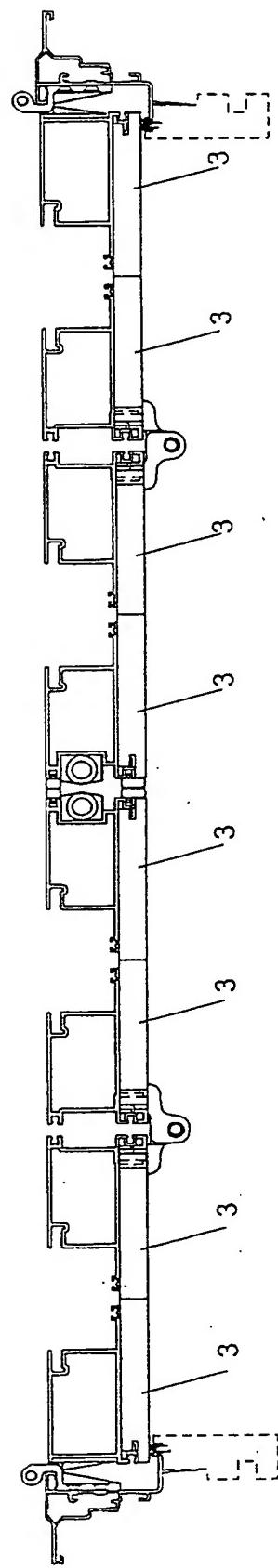


FIGURE 9A

8/17

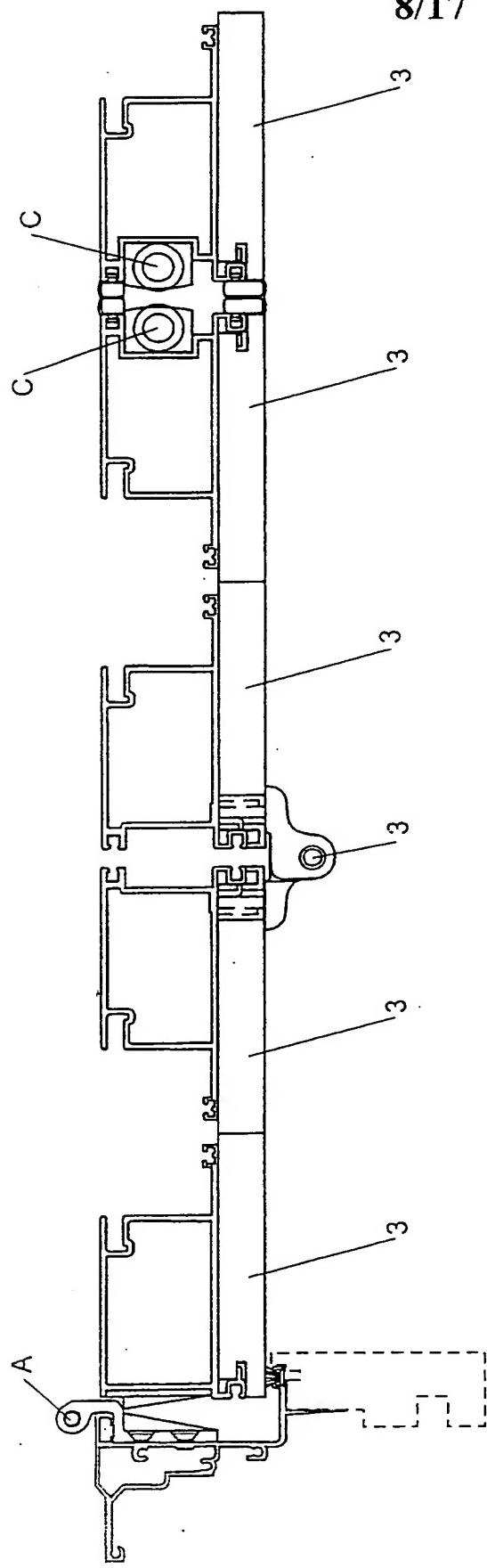
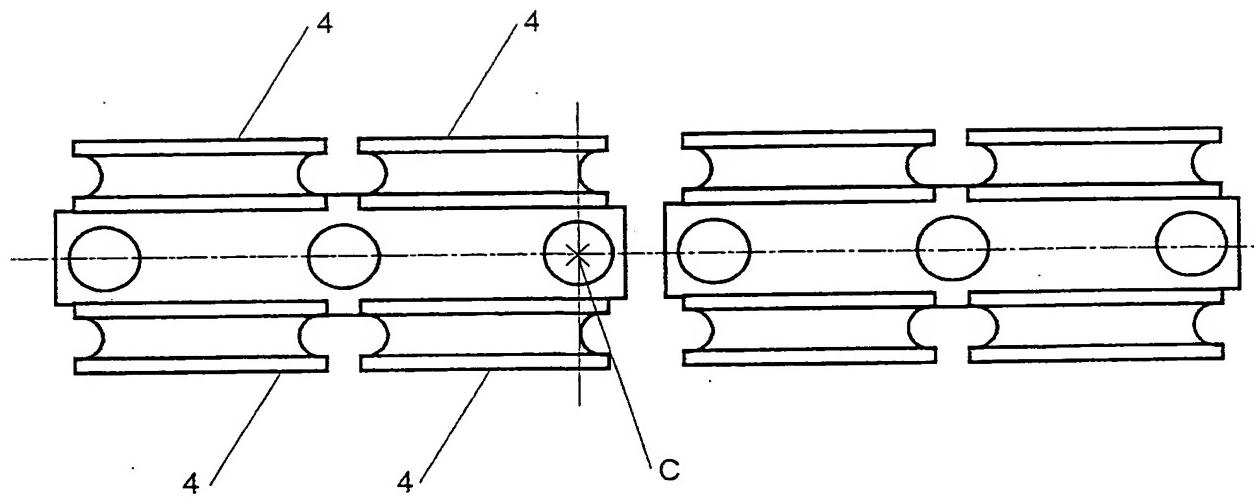
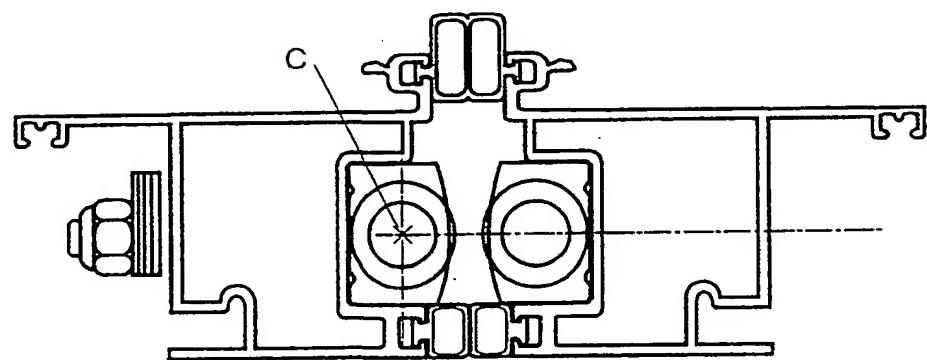


FIGURE 9B

9/17

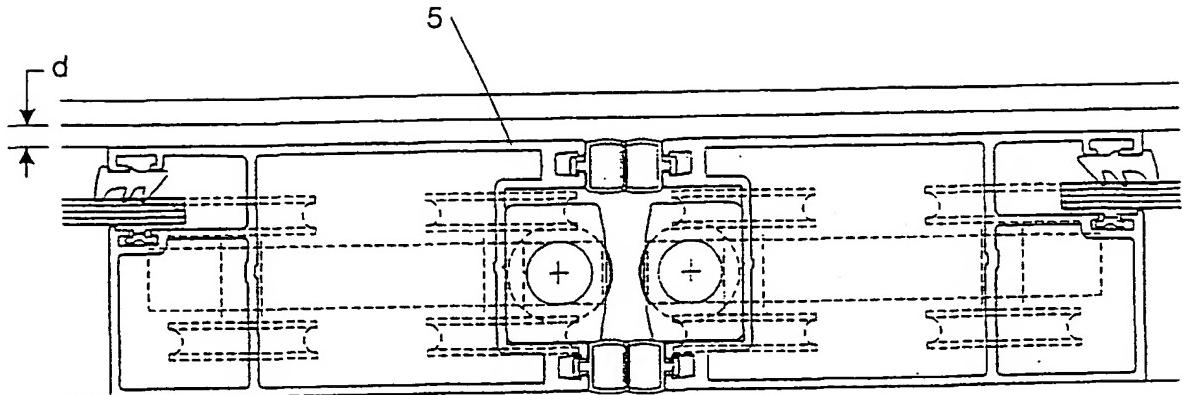


**FIGURE 10A**

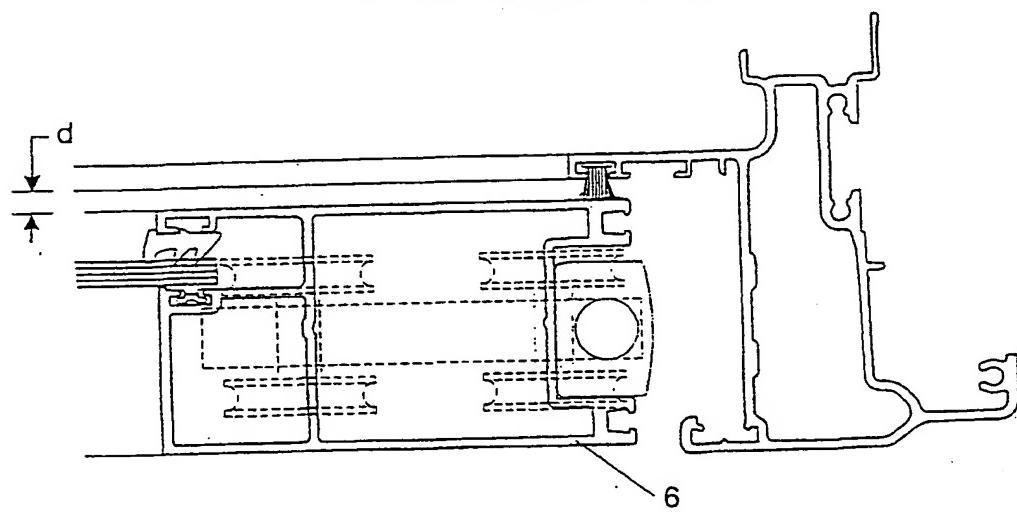


**FIGURE 10B**

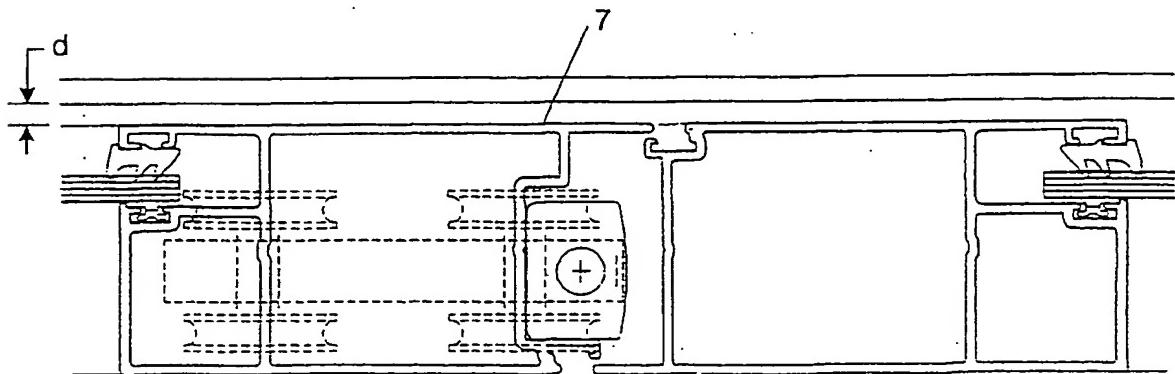
**10/17**



**FIGURE 11A**

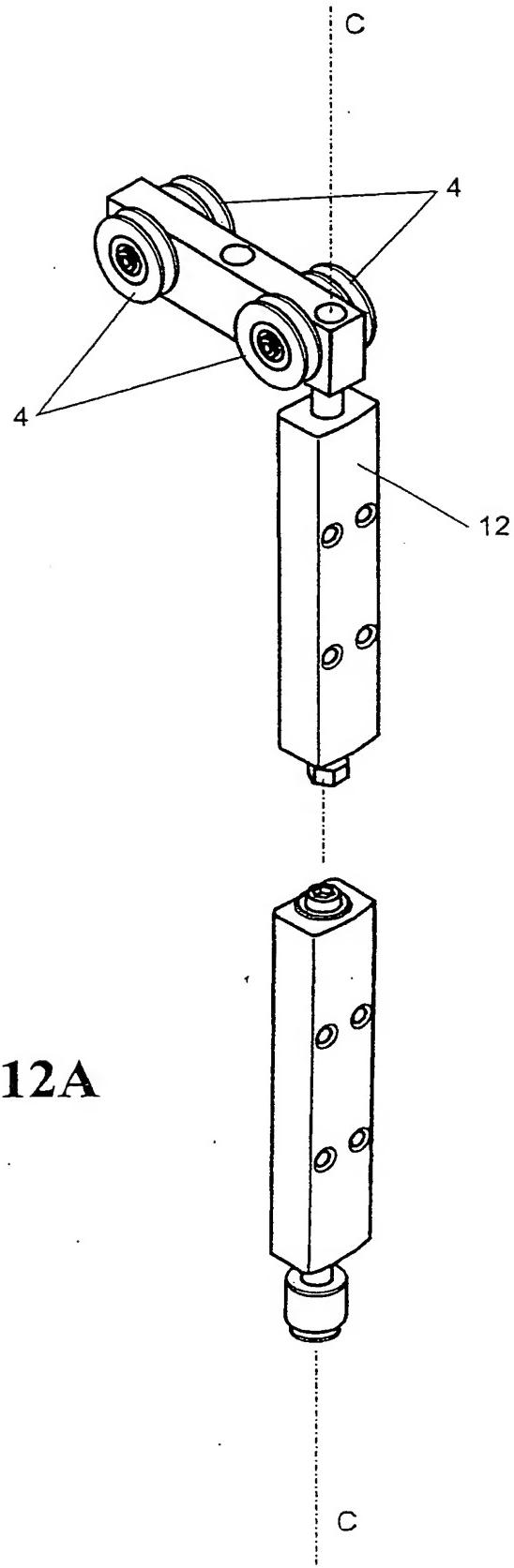


**FIGURE 11B**



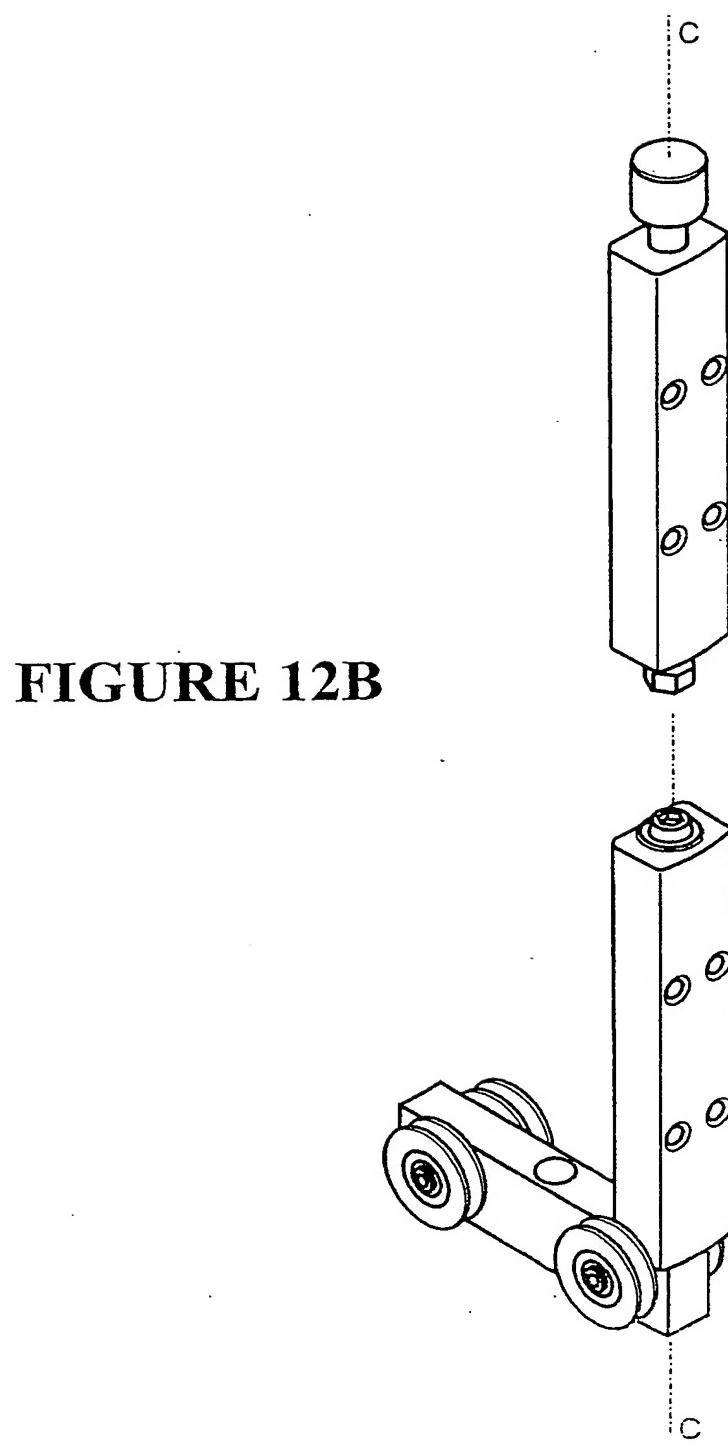
**FIGURE 11C**

**11/17**



**FIGURE 12A**

**12/17**



13/17

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY  
OFFICE OF N.Z.  
02 APR 2003  
RECEIVED

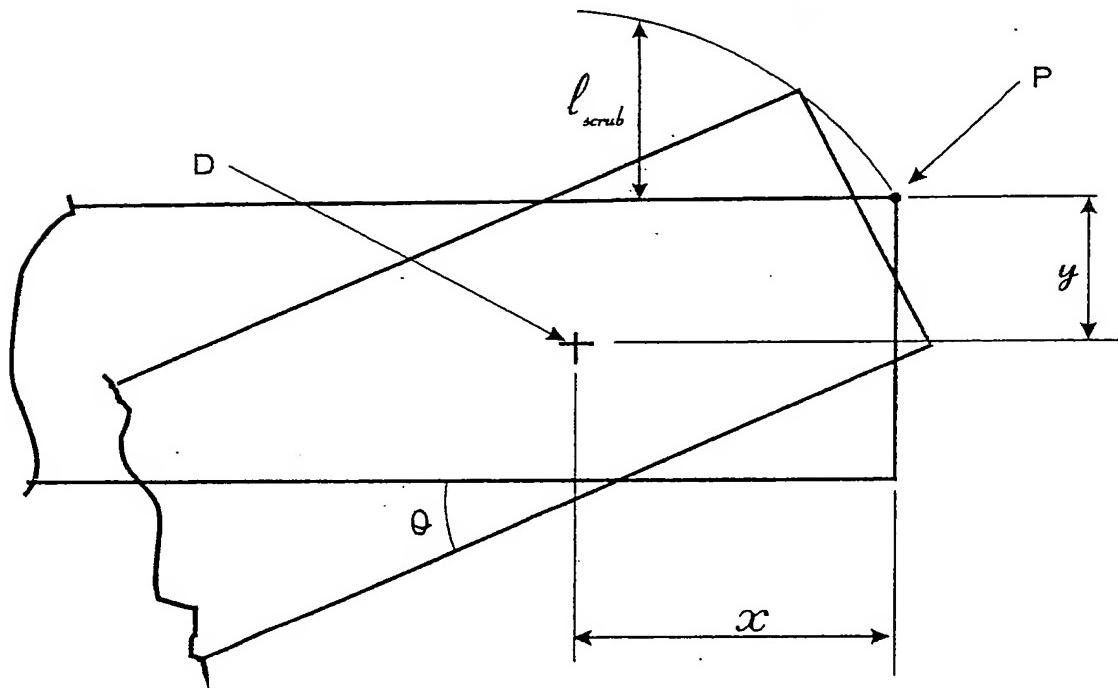
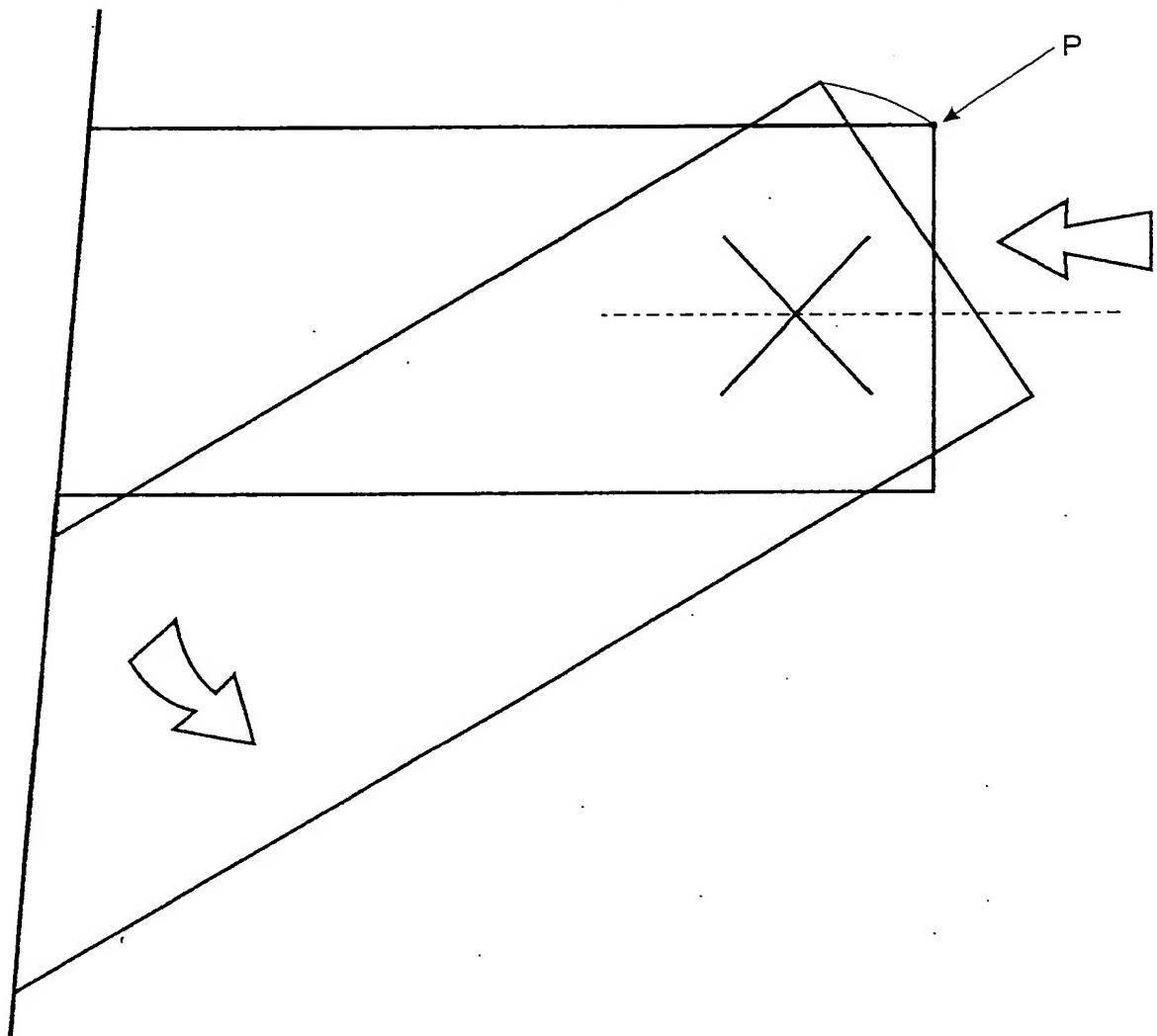


FIGURE 13A

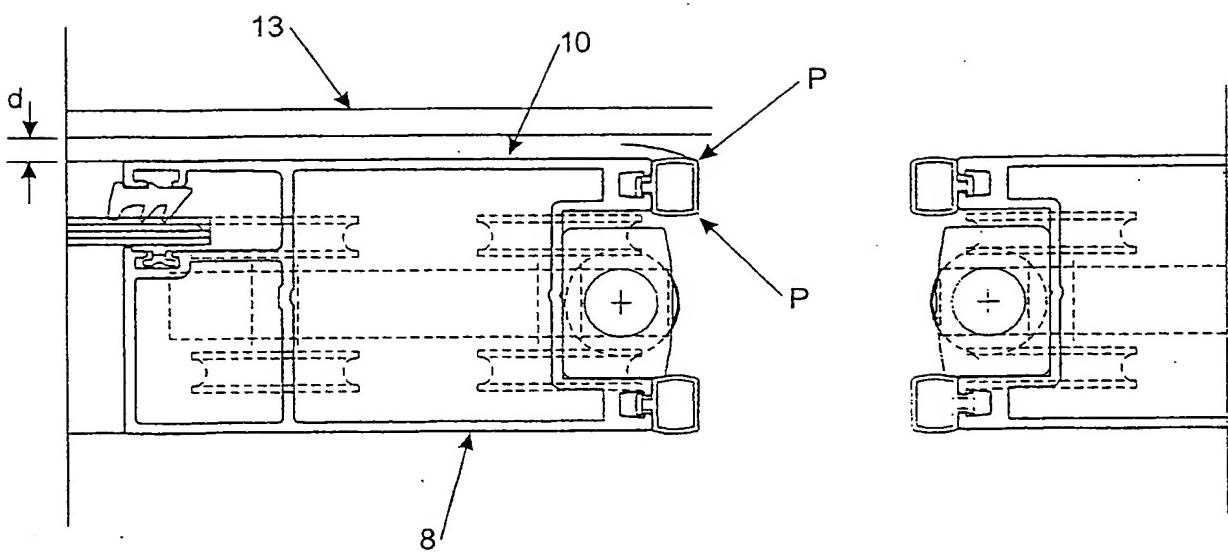
$$l_{\text{SCRUB}} = \sqrt{x^2 + y^2} * [\sin(\tan^{-1}(y/x) + \theta)] - y$$

14/17



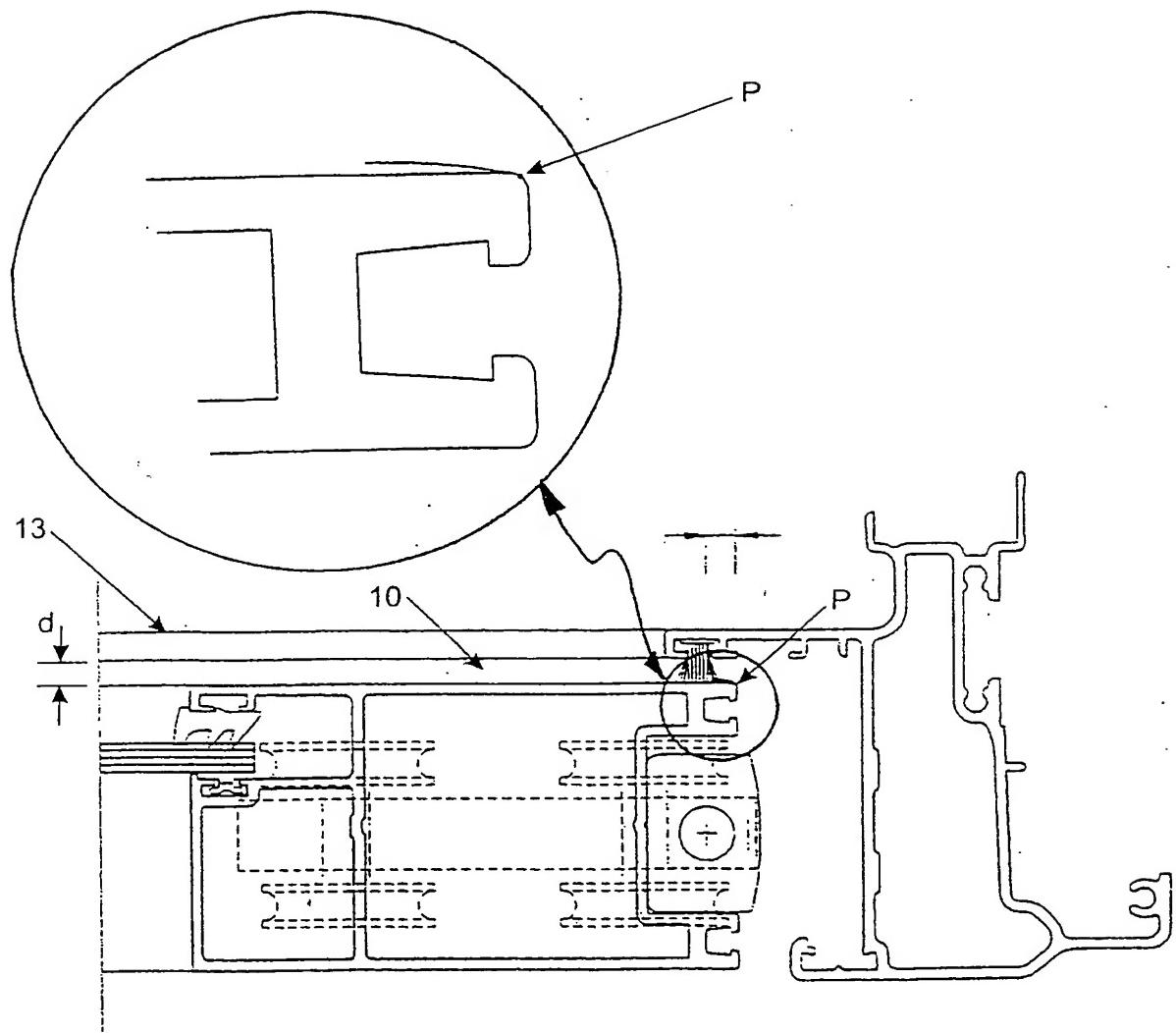
**FIGURE 13B**

15/17



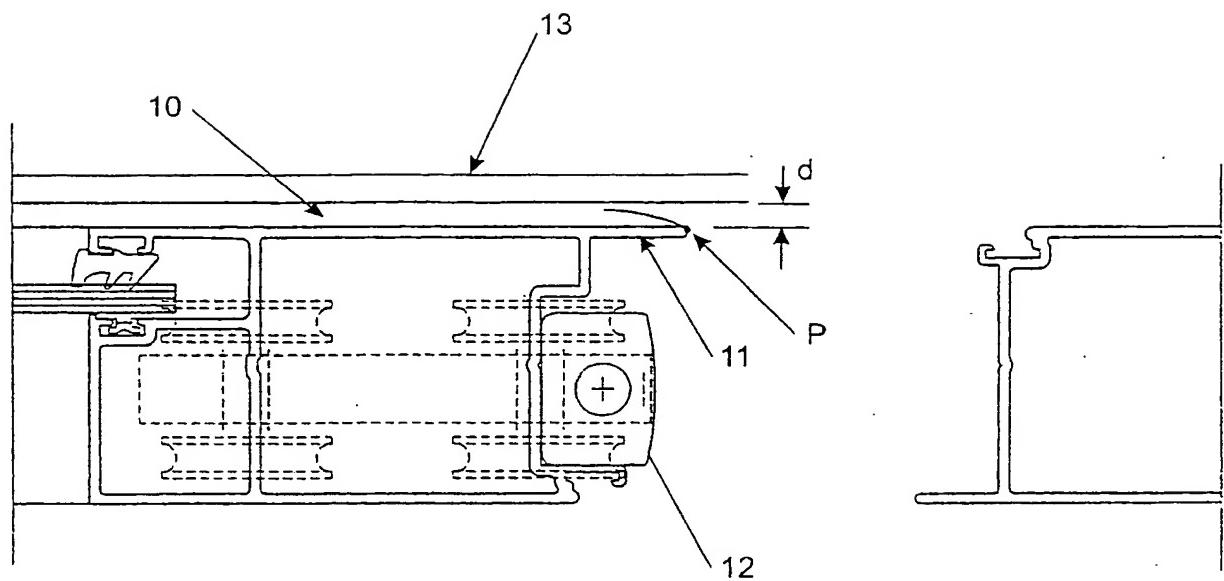
**FIGURE 14A**

16/17



**FIGURE 14B**

17/17



**FIGURE 14C**